**SEMESTER II**

**READING COMPREHENSION TEST**

**THE TRIMMED LAMP (after O. Henry)**

Lou and Nancy were friends. They came to New York to find work because there was not enough to eat at their homes. Nancy was nineteen. Lou was twenty. Both Nancy and Lou were very pretty. Lou found work in a laundry. She was an ironer. Nancy began to work as a sales-girl.

At the end of six months of their life in the big city, Lou met a young man named Dan. They soon became good friends. In fact they fell in love with each other. They went out together several times a week.

"Aren't you cold, Nancy?" Lou asked her friend one evening. They were standing on the corner waiting for Dan. "I feel sorry for you. Why are you working in that old store for eight dollars a week? I made eighteen dollars last week! Of course, ironing is not so pleasant as selling gloves in a store, but it pays.None of the ironers make less than ten dollars a week. I like my work."

"And I like mine," said Nancy, "even though I make only eight dollars a week. I like to work in a big store, and to be among beautiful things and nice people. One of our sales-girls married a steel maker from Pittsburg. He makes a lot of money! You may be sure I'll catch a millionaire some day! And whom can you marry working in a laundry?"

"Why, I met Dan in the laundry,'" said Lou. "He came in to get his Sunday shirt and collars and saw me. I was ironing. Later he said he had noticed my arms first, how white and round they were. I tell you, some very rich men come to laundries. Of course if you want to starve and put on airs, do as you like!"

Just then Dan came. He was an electrician, making thirty dollars a week. It was clear he was in love with Lou, he looked at her with the sad eyes of Romeo.

"Nancy, I want to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Owens. Dan, shake hands with Miss Danforth," said Lou.

"I'm very glad to meet you, Miss Danforth," said Dan. "I've heard so much about you from Lou."

"Thanks," said Nancy, "I've heard from her about you, too."

"I have tickets for a theatre," said Dan. "Let's all go." The three of them started out to have a good time together.

Nancy had no gentlemen friends. Nobody waited for her after work. Some of the sales-girls joked that she was waiting to "catch a millionaire". "I'll make the biggest catch in the world, – or nothing at all!"she used to say.

One day, two of the sales-girls who worked with Nancy invited her to have dinner together with them and their gentlemen friends. The dinner took place in a fashionable cafe.

One of the gentlemen friends had no hair on his head, – the other wore a diamond ring and liked neither the food nor the wine.

The next day the gentleman with the diamond ring appeared in the shop and asked Nancy to marry him. She said 'no'. When he left, one of the girls said to Nancy: "What a terrible fool you are! That fellow is a millionaire – he is the son of Van Skittles himself! Are you mad, Nancy? What do you want? Do you want to be a Mormon and marry Rockefeller and the King of Spain at the same time?"

"I don't want his money," said Nancy "I don't ' like him, that's all! I want to marry a rich man, that's true. But I also want to like him!"

Lou worked on in the laundry. Out of her eighteen dollars a week she paid six dollars for her room and board. The rest of the money went for clothes.

When the day's work was over she met Dan who was always waiting for her outside the laundry.

Sometimes Dan did not like her clothes, they were too bright – he thought – and in bad taste. But she liked bright clothes, and when people in the streets looked at her, she liked that very much.

Dan and Lou always asked Nancy to come with them when they went out to have a good time.

One Saturday afternoon the two girls met, and Lou said: "Dan is always asking me to marry him. But why should I? I am independent. Now I can do what I like with the money I make. And if I marry Dan he will not allow me to work. Nancy, what are your plans for the future? Have you caught your millionaire yet?"

"Not yet," said Nancy with a laugh. "I haven't selected one yet..."

"You are joking, of course," said Lou.

"Millionaires don't notice working girls like us. Still I am sure that I'll catch one before you do."

Nancy worked on. She watched and studied the rich men and women who came to the store. She hoped some day to find the man she could marry.

So she kept her lamp trimmed and burning to receive her bridegroom when he should come.

One Thursday evening Nancy left the store and walked over to the laundry. Dan and Lou had invited her to go to a musical comedy with them.

Dan was just coming out of the laundry when she arrived. There was a strange nervous look on his face.

"I hoped to find out something about her. I thought they had heard from her," he said. "Heard from whom? What are you talking about?" said Nancy. "Isn't Lou there?" "I thought you knew everything," said Dan. "She hasn't been here or at the house where she lived since Monday. She lock all her things from there. She told one of the girls in the laundry that she was going to Europe."

"Has anybody seen her anywhere?" asked Nancy. Dan looked at her. His gray eyes were like steel.

"They told me in the laundry," he said, "that they saw her yesterday ... in an automobile. With one of those millionaires that you and Lou were always talking about."

For the first time in her life Nancy did not know what to say. Then she laid her hand on Dan's arm and said:

"You have no right to say such a thing to me, Dan. Do you think that she has done it because of my jokes about millionaires? I am sorry for you, but I have nothing to do with it."

"I'm sorry I said it," answered Dan, "Don't be angry with me!"

"I have tickets for a show to-night," he said a moment later. "If you..."

Nancy saw how miserable he was and she felt sorry for him.

"I'll come with you, Dan," she said.

Three-months passed before Nancy saw Lou again.

One evening she was hurrying home from the store. Suddenly somebody called her name. She turned around and saw Lou who caught her in her arms.

Nancy noticed at once that Lou had become rich. She was very well dressed and had diamond rings on her fingers.

"You little fool," cried Lou, "I see you are still working in that store. I see you haven't caught a millionaire yet."

And then Lou looked and saw that Nancy had something better than money, something that shone brighter than stars in her eyes, something that was redder than a rose in her cheeks. Happiness!

"Yes, I'm still in the store," said Nancy, "but I am going to leave it next week. I've made my catch, the best catch in the world. I'm going to be married to Dan... to Dan! He is my Dan now."

A policeman, going around the corner of the park saw two young women. One of them, with diamond rings on her fingers was crying like a child. The other, a simply dressed working girl, was trying to console her. The policeman passed on. He knew he could not help the one who was crying.

**READING COMPREHENSION TEST**

**I Do you agree or not?**

1 Nancy and Lou came to New York to catch the bridegrooms.

2 The girls did not find any work in New York.

3 Lou found her happiness in New York

4 Nancy envied Lou.

5 When Van Skittles asked Nancy to marry him she agreed at once.

6 Lou was looking forward to marrying Dan.

7 Dan was nervous when he hadn't found Lou.

8 Lou was happier than Nancy.

**II Choose the correct answer according to the information in the text.**

1 Lou and Nancy came to New York

a) for entertainment; b) to get acquainted with its sights; c) to find work; d) to buy all the necessary things.

2 Lou and Dan

a) got married on the second day; b) became good friends soon; c) were close relatives d) met in the theatre.

3 Nancy's dream was

a) to return home; b) to change her boring work; c) to spend all her free time shopping; d) to catch a millionaire some day.

4 It was clear that Dan was in love with Lou because

a) he brought her flowers every day; b) he looked at her with the sad eyes of Romeo.

c) he asked her to marry him; d) he wanted to be with Lou every minute.

5 Nancy refused to marry the son of Van Skittles because

a) he wasn't rich enough; b) she fall in love with the other man; c) he lived in a small provincial town; d) she didn't like him.

6 When Nancy met Dan there was a strange nervous look on his face because

a) he had forgotten his wallet at home; b) his mother was seriously ill; c) he hadn't been able to find out something about Lou; d) he had lost his job.

7 When Nancy saw Lou

a) she learned that Lou was very unhappy; b) she told her about her further marriage.

c) they went to a café; d) she invited her to her new place.

**III Choose the right answer**

1 Lou:

a) liked her work very much;

b) wanted to catch a millionaire;

c) decided to return home.

2 Dan:

a) wanted to marry Lou as she always told Nancy;

b) was a millionaire who liked spending his free time with poor girls;

c) wasn't an honest man.

3 Nancy:

a) seemed a matter-of-fact sort of girl;

b) had something better than money, something that shone brighter than stars in her eyes;

c) was very unhappy.